

# Women's Secretariat INFORMATION

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## HOW TO PREPARE A MEANINGFUL RESUME

## AND PRESENT YOURSELF WELL IN AN INTERVIEW


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**Alberta**

WOMEN'S SECRETARIAT

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## HOW TO PREPARE A MEANINGFUL RESUME

Applying for a job is an art, and there are techniques which can be used to ensure that you present an accurate image of yourself to the prospective employer. A well prepared resume is impressive and is one sure way to generate enough interest in you by a prospective employer to gain you an interview.

Very little has been written in Canada on the preparation of a meaningful resume. The following suggestions can be adapted to suit the position for which you are applying.

### Covering Letter

Include a covering letter to introduce yourself and your related experience to the prospective employer. This letter should immediately capture the interest of the potential employer, resulting in an interview. It is important to make yourself stand out above other applicants.

1. Be neat. Type the application if possible and don't make corrections on your final copy. Use grammatically correct English with no spelling or typographical errors. Make sure you send the original letter to an employer rather than a photocopy. Also, send the letter to the person who is actually doing the hiring.
2. Include a return address of where you should be contacted to maintain confidentiality of the application.
3. Include your full name. It is not required to include such designations as Mr. Mrs. Miss or Ms. It is your choice on whether or not to supply this information.



4. In your first paragraph, state why you are writing.

Name the advertised position you are applying for and include reference to the fact that your resume is enclosed. In the second paragraph, explain what you have to offer the employer and how your background, training and experience are relevant. The third paragraph should detail why the position is of interest to you. Write in a way that will gain the interest of the potential employer. In closing, request an interview or state how you will follow up your letter.

5. Be brief, but include all pertinent information.

### RESUME

A resume is a device to spark the interest of an employer. It should be short, easy to read, and organized. Your resume should also be designed to fit the needs of the job for which you are applying including a position number where applicable.

A suggested format includes the following information:

1. Personal

- Name
- Address
- Telephone numbers (business and residence).

According to The Individual's Rights Protection Act you are not required to provide your date or place of birth. However, it is acceptable to provide this information if you so choose.

## 2. Education

Begin with your most recent educational background and work backwards.

- Name and location of educational institution
- Certificate, diploma, or degree obtained
- Dates of graduation
- Program/speciality/option -- perhaps something about the course content.
- Extra studies -- this would include night school courses or special courses connected with employment.
- Special educational achievements -- scholarships, awards, honour list, etc.

## 3. Employment History

- List your previous employment history starting with your present (or most recent) position and work backwards. This should include the title of the position, the number of years in that position, responsibilities and duties.
- If possible, use points rather than paragraphs to explain, as points are much easier to read and digest.
- Be more detailed in your description of positions held over the past five years than those prior to that time.
- Use headings to emphasize change of topic.

- Attach supporting documentation if there is something that you have done very well.
- Include field placement during college or university, summer employment, part-time employment, full-time employment and volunteer work.

#### 4. Personal Support Data

- Special awards or distinctions
- Offices or positions held in clubs or organizations
- Hobbies and interests
- Skills. These would include equipment operated, shorthand/typing speeds, first-aid certificate, photography, artwork, etc.

#### 5. Career Objectives

Include the type of work which interests you and the kind of business organization for which you would like to work. Career objectives can be used either in a resume or covering letter.

#### 6. References

Give the full name, title, business address and telephone number of each reference. Include one business reference and one character reference. Always receive permission to use someone as a reference. Not only is this a courtesy to your references, but they will also have you fresh in their minds should a prospective employer call them.



### Points to Remember

1. Always try to apply with an original application. If this is not possible, keep the original and make sure that every copy is taken from the original. A standard format includes having the resume typed, with sufficient white space and headings on the left side of the page and details relating to them on the right.
2. Cluster and summarize related experience. This could appear on a separate sheet, right after your personal and educational information and before your employment history. It should include the most related aspects of your past experience to the position you are applying for, explaining how each is related. Be as brief as possible.
3. Keep your resume up-to-date. Do not cross out previous addresses; retype the page giving the current address.
4. Always be truthful -- don't exaggerate or misrepresent yourself.
5. Unless you know what salary the employer generally pays for the job, omit any mention of salary or salary objective so you do not overprice or underprice yourself before the employer meets you.

### The Interview

1. Before your interview, do some research regarding the company, and if possible, the position. You are then able to ask intelligent questions and show a genuine interest in the position. Good source material for

researching a company include: annual reports, business directories, Scott's Industrial Index, and Financial Post surveys.

2. First impressions are very important. Arrive a few minutes prior to the interview so that you will have time to compose yourself. Make sure you have the correct address and time of the interview and know the name of the person who will be interviewing you.
3. Try to appear relaxed.
4. Check your appearance to be sure you look as well-groomed as possible. Wear clothing appropriate to the company's image and suitable to the job.
5. Don't answer questions hastily. It is a good idea to take time before the interview to mentally prepare answers to potential questions. Also take time to think about your answer; then give a detailed reply. Ask for clarification on a poorly phrased question rather than answering a question you do not understand.
6. Be prepared to answer questions about your present and expected salary.
7. Express confidence and willingness to learn.
8. Ask questions regarding the position and how it relates to your career plans.
9. If applicable, take a portfolio with samples of your work to the interview.
10. Follow-up the interview with a thank you note.



For further information on career development and counselling contact one of the 18 Alberta Career Centres, located throughout the province.

**Bonnyville**

Box 1798  
101 Administration Bldg.  
c/o ECRS  
5008 - 50 Avenue  
T0A 0L0  
Telephone: 826-4175

**Calgary**

2nd Floor  
805 - 9 Street SW  
T2P 2Y6  
Telephone: 297-6347

**Camrose**

Room 110B, Prov. Bldg.  
4867 - 50 Street  
T4V 1P6  
Telephone: 679-1275

**Edmonton**

101 Sun Building  
10363 - 108 Street  
T5J 1L8  
Telephone: 427-5659

**Fort McMurray**

740 Jubilee Centre, W Tower  
9915 Franklin Avenue  
T9H 2K4  
Telephone: 743-7207

**Grande Prairie**

Room 1201, Prov. Bldg.  
10320 - 99 Street  
T8V 6J4  
Telephone: 538-5348

**Pincher Creek**

Box 2138  
226 Provincial Bldg.  
782 Main Street  
T0K 1W0  
Telephone: 627-3922

**Red Deer**

Box 5002  
3rd Floor W, 4920 - 51 St.  
Provincial Building  
T4N 6K8  
Telephone: 340-5353

**High Level**

2nd Floor, Provincial Building  
9812 - 101 Street  
T0H 1Z0  
Telephone: 926-2661

**Hinton**

Box 1460  
Promway Building  
112 McLeod Avenue  
T0E 1B0  
Telephone 865-8257

**Lethbridge**

Bag Service 3014  
400 Professional Bldg.  
740 - 4 Avenue S  
T1J 4C7  
Telephone: 381-5444

**Lloydminster**

5704 - 44 Street  
T9V 2A1  
Telephone: 871-6480

**Medicine Hat**

302 Provincial Building  
770 - 6 Street SW  
T1A 4J6  
Telephone: 529-3683

**Peace River**

P.O. Box 2, Bag 900  
Kit Building  
10016 - 101 Street  
T0H 2X0  
Telephone: 624-6211

**Slave Lake**

Box 787  
2nd Floor, SLD Building  
c/o ECRS  
T0G 2A0  
Telephone: 849-7220

**Wetaskiwin**

2nd Floor, Provincial Building  
5201 - 50 Avenue  
T9A 2A5  
Telephone: 352-1357

**St. Paul**

Box 1989

100 Melenchuk's Mall

5009 - 50 Avenue

TOA 3A0

Telephone: 645-6383

**Whitecourt**

244 Provincial Building

5020 - 52 Avenue

TOE 2L0

Telephone: 778-4885

**Or call the CAREER HOTLINE @ 422-4266**

**elsewhere in Alberta call 0 ask for Zenith 22140**

**Alberta**

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